Sarah Warren Weston to Eliz. Pease

Boston January 30. 1842

GARRISON MSS.

Dear Friend,

Wendell tells me that it will not be in his power to write to you at this time and I know that every moment of poor Garrison's time is occupied by a severe domestic affliction. His wife's sister, a very lovely woman who has been for the last year an inmate of his family is rapidly approaching her last hour, if indeed she be now living. (died Jan. 29) As these friends are prevented from giving you the information which you will I know, be glad to receive touching our recent Annual Meeting, I am emboldened to attempt it, although I feel that probably the subject will suffer in my hands. I am a very prosaic matter of fact person and therefore quite unequal to the task. "What!" you will exclaim in astonishment "is it possible that the Mass Society that has lost "the staff of accomplishment" changed into a Woman's Rights Society, nobody knows what besides, can have arrived at such a pitch of greatness as to need any thing but a prosaic pen to describe its doings?" Even so, had I but the gift, I have the material to work up for you some most glowing descriptions, but as it is you must rest content with a plain statement of facts. I shall reverse the usual method and begin with the best first. Last Friday evening the 28th a public meeting was held in Faneuil Hall composed of citizens of Boston & vicinity to testify against Slavery in the District of Columbia, & to exhibit & cause the great Irish Remonstrance to their brethren in America. You are aware of the associations that cluster round Faneuil Hall. It is in the centre of the city, the largest public building in it hung with the portraits of Hancock, Adams, Hancock, Warren & other Revolutionary worthies, & as a fine, the place to which Bostonians push on any occasion when popular feeling is highly excited. The galleries, three in number, deep & ample, were entirely filled by ladies & the

gentlemen who accompanied them, while the lower floor was thronged by a dense mass of men. The Hall will contain five thousand and it was full. Amid the most enthusiastic cheers Garrison was called to the Chair, & he assumed it, in a most graceful manner. He is eminently fitted to preside over an assembly of this character. One might not think it when contemplating his calm apostolic looking face, or when hearing him defend a creed that to some minds almost savours of mysticism, but it is nevertheless true that I never saw any man, save John Quincy Adams, who seemed so perfectly to understand the art of swaying the mind of a popular assembly. A propos Garrison reminds me of mine who was present in the mob of 1835. Twas Garrison expressed the greatest earnestness to address the populace, declaring that if he could only be heard, he could allay the tumult. I dare say he might have been right, for when addressing a meeting of this sort there seems the same communication between him & his auditors that goes on in a private animated conversation. Colman and Quincy moved the acceptance of a series of Resolutions, drawn up in very strong language, in regard to Slavery in the District & highly approbatory of the course of Adams (You will learn from the American papers in general that he is fighting hard to save us from war with Texas & other Southern Slaves) They were received with cheers loud & long & supported by eloquent speeches from Quincy, Bradburn, Col Miller of Vermont, James Canning Fuller of N. Y. — Frederick Douglass, a fugitive Slave, Remond, & Lucretia Mott. I must tell you before I proceed that by the active endeavours of Mr Collins, information of the meeting & its purpose had been well circulated among the Irish, and large numbers of them were in attendance. The natural pertinacities of the Irish peasant (& such only come among us) in connection with his dress make him to be as easily distinguished from an Englishman as a coloured man from a white. Their enthusiasm at the mention of the names of O Connell & Father Mathew

was perfectly overwhelming. All the speakers were peculiarly fortunate. They spoke just long enough & said no more than just the thing they ought. Irish land & her manifold oppressions were alluded to in terms of righteous indignation and universally the Chartists received a helping hand. The Irish Address was read by Garrison & received with the loudest applause. After Douglass had finished speaking, Garrison appealed to the audience to know if they would ever return a fugitive slave & cries of "Never never" rang thro' the Hall. But I must bring this to a close by telling you that this was pronounced by all the most brilliant & successful Anti Slavery meeting ever held in the Commonwealth. Now you must not imagine that these 5000 who then made the ample roof to ring with their rejoicing were all born & fledged good Abolitionists. A large number certainly were, and the remainder had for the time their general enthusiasm for freedom which the human soul, unless specially excepted, inclines to. Such a feeling in short as your English audiences feel. The three days previous to Friday evening had been devoted to the business meetings of the Mass Soc. which were well attended, & pervaded throughout by a spirit. Thursday evening a most crowded meeting was held at the State House and eloquent speeches were delivered. The Treasurer's Report was highly satisfactory. The Society was free from debt & $500 in the Treasury. About $9 00 was either pledged or contributed, which taken in connexion with a fair worth $4 or 5000 recently left to the Society, & a donation of some beautiful pictures (one said to be a Vandyke, they were brought by the given from Italy) makes us feel quite rich. Our dear friend Rogers is warning us of the dangers of prosperity — We have had so little danger of this sort that I should hardly think a blink, as your Scotch neighbours say, would upset us. — But I must leave myself room, dear Elizabeth, (it brings me very near to you to call you thus) to thank you most sincerely for your long & interesting letter. I shall ever remember how rejoiced I was when I learned the depth of your sympathy for the poor Chartists. You may say that I ought in justice to you to have taken that for granted, but the pitiful silencers of some very very lonely people have made me timid & fearful.

Tell us some thing about the Charlist fair — where will it take place for it, & in what way. I assume you are feeling for Human Rights & not for those of coloured men merely. — grieve to tell you that Henry's health is still very delicate. would not greatly surprise me were they to again visit Italy. But I cannot speak with certainty. He attends to business every day, but his cough troubles him. Maria is well, but I do not know whether she designs visiting or not, as I am passing a few days with my dear friends, the Sargents in a remote part of the city. The Phillips' are very cosily situated as a pleasant house but a very short distance from Channing Place. I think Ann slowly improving, but I fear she will be always an invalid.

Please remember me to your husband & children & to your father & mother. I am glad to learn that Anne Whitney has gone. She is a delightful girl & an excellent artist. I do not know whether she designs visiting or not, as I am passing a few days with my dear friends, the Sargents in a remote part of the city. The Phillips' are very cosily situated as a pleasant house but a very short distance from Channing Place. I think Ann slowly improving, but I fear she will be always an invalid.

Boston is at the present time turned upside down by the presence of Charles Dickens. Every body appears to have lost their senses & can attend to nothing except a few such parts of the invitations prepared for the occasion as their time is devoted to sitting for busts & pictures. This Dickens brought a letter to Ann Phillips from Mrs Reed of Liverpool & as Ann's health did not permit her making a party, the Chapman family invited Dickens etc. I seized the opportunity of calling with Mary Chapman but I was a little disappointed. He did not come up to my ideal. I fear he will do nothing for the Anti Slavery cause tho' he might do much. They are going to have a meeting for him & I am invited but I cannot go. I am the man who feels so much for the poor Negroes & can help feeling for the slave. We shall be